Representations from Tobacco Growers to Government

1926. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tobacco exporters of Andhra Pradesh have recently represented to Government regarding their grievances;

(b) if so, how many of such representations reached Government;

(c) what are the details thereof; and

(d) what steps have been taken to redress the same?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Indian Tobacco Association, Guntur have requested Government to extend further advance technical credit to Russia for purchasing the balance of 5400 MTs of tobacco out of 15000 MTs of tobacco earlier contracted for export Government would favourably consider a further Russian request for technical credit if it is utilised for exports of the balance quantities of tobacco mentioned above.

Newsprint contract of STC

1927. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that STC propose to go in for a commercial settlement in respect of its dispute with the Meteor Paper Ltd., of London for a news print contract despite the fact that the matter is under investigation of CBI;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for settling the issues without waiting for the CBI enquiry; and

(c) what are the issues involved which are being investigated by the CBI?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (c) Ministry of Commerce or STC is not aware of investigation of the case by the CBI. However, as a part of commercial transaction, STC has reached an agreement with M/s. Meteor Paper Ltd., London in June, 1992 for making payment against supply of newsprint by the foreign supplier.

Impact of new Export-Import Policy

1928. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the impact of the new Export and Import policy on exports during the last three months;

(b) the value of exports made in various sectors since April, 1992 indicating whether the export to General Currency Area countries have increased;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what further steps are proposed to be taken to increase/improve this export position?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (c) Since the announcement of the new Export-Import Policy, the trade data has become available only for the first two months of the current financial year i.e. April-May, 1992. According to the provisional figures, India's aggregate exports amounted to Rs. 7663.43 crores during April-May, 1992, as compared to Rs. 5606.04 crores during April-May, 1991, thereby registering a growth of 36.7 per cent. The exports to the General Currency Area (GCA) countries amounted to Rs. 7278.79 crores during April-May, 1992 as compared to

Rs. 4966.15 crores during April-May. 1991, thereby registering a growth of 46.6 per cent Sectoral break-down of data is not yet available.

(d) Several changes in trade policy were introduced since July 1991 aimed at strengthening export incentives, eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and rationalising the import tariff structure. Rupee has been made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange. These steps have been furthr consolidated in the new Export Import Policy which, inter-alia, aims at promoting productivity, modernisation and competitiveness of Indian Industry and thereby enhacing its export capabilities.

Technical credit earmarked to export tobacco to Russian Republic

1929. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total technical credit earmarked to export F.C.V. tobacco to Russian Republics;

(b) what is the total requirement thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to fill the gap?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) At the specific request from Russia to enable them to buy tobacco and tobacco products, technical credits of $ 25 million and $ 4 million respectively have been advanced to them by the Government

(b) and (c) Grant of Technical Credit is considered at the request of Russia. No formal request for further grant of technical credit has been received from the Russian Government. Government would favourably consider a further Russian request for technical credit if it is utilised for exports of the balance quantities.

The Government have been impressing upon the Russians to fulfil their export targets to India, so that adequate funds are generated for fulfilling the targets of Indian exports in the trade protocol.

Meeting of tobacco growers with Prime Minister

1930. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an all party delegation met the Prime Minister on the 11th May, 1992 and discussed the problems of tobacco growers of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, what are the contents of the memorandum; and

(c) what were the assurances offered by the Prime Minister as well as Minister of State for Commerce and in what manner they are likely to be implemented?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the memorandum handed over to Prime Minister by the delegation, a number of proposals like purchase of tobacco by STC, removing the stringent grading of tobacco, giving export orders to Andhra Pradesh Tobacco Growers Cooperative Union, fixing of production target, giving more representation to growers in Tobacco Board, fixing MSP by Tobacco Board, setting up of fulfledged agency under Tobacco Board to stabilise market were mentioned.

(c) The position in regard to these suggestions are given below:-

— STC was advised to purchase only if the prices of tobacco fell below the starting prices agreed to betweeen the growers and traders. Since, the average prices at various platforms were above the agreed price level, STC